



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



FAMILY PRESENTED WITH PURPLE HEART CERTIFICATE

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman had the distinct honor last week to present SSG Christina Sihrer with Sergeant Marvin Sihrer's Purple Heart certificate.

Marvin, a Korean War Veteran POW/KIA, was Christina's and Susan Wilcox' (DON at MJFSVH) third cousin.

The certificate was discovered in a second-hand store in Bremerton, WA, by Navy Veteran Ernie Shriner and was forwarded to Secretary Zimmerman.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

SDDVA's Thomson to Retire	2
WW II Recognition	3
VA Whole Health	4
VA Interface Pledge	5
Post 15 Celebrates 99th Birthday	5
Vietnam Veterans Day	6
Vietnam Veterans Day	7
My HealtheVet	8
Boots to Business	9
Upcoming Events	10



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:
THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
HAS AWARDED THE

PURPLE HEART

ESTABLISHED BY GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON
AT NEWBURGH, NEW YORK, AUGUST 7, 1782
TO

Sergeant Marvin M. Sihrer, RA 17 277 733, Infantry

FOR WOUNDS RECEIVED
IN ACTION

resulting in his death in Korea
GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON
THIS 14th DAY OF January 1954

South Dakota National Guard
Senior Enlisted Leader (SEL) CSM
James Hoekman also participated in
the presentation.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home has openings in nursing care.

Please let veterans in your area know that there are rooms available and have them contact Tyler Rousselle at 605-745-5127 Ext. 1500123.

THOMSON TO RETIRE FROM SDDVA TEAM

SDDVA's Don Thomson will be retiring from the Claims Office on March 30th. Don has been working with the state of South Dakota in one facet or another since December of 1974 when he joined the South Dakota Army National Guard. He served as an AGR employee until his retirement in 2001.

In July 2001, he was hired by Lake County as the County Veteran Service Officer and Emergency Manager. In November of 2013 he began as a VSO in the Sioux Falls claims office and was quickly promoted to Program Manager I. As program manager, Don handled training and all appeals for South Dakota veterans represented by our partners and has processed over 800 appeals. Don was instrumental in designing the games used to prepare everyone for the annual testing during the benefit conference—Twisted Jeopardy anyone????

Don will be greatly missed by the Department and our partners, and we wish him all the best in his retirement endeavors.

Erin Bultje has been promoted to the Program Manager I position and will be handling training, appeals and South Dakota Joining Forces.



Don preparing for Mini Conferences.



Don recognized by his peers.



Don wondering why he can't grow a little face hair!!!!



Don assisting VSO's during training.

SPARROW RECOGNIZES WW II VETERAN

Rain or shine, weekday or weekend, Turner County VSO Tom Sparrow is truly on a mission to honor and thank all veterans. He has made his outreach for veterans a 24-7 routine. Last week while in Walmart in Sioux Falls, Tom saw a veteran with a WWII cap on and stopped to visit with him and thank him for his service.

During their conversation Tom realized that Veteran Ron Vogel had not received his WWII medal from South Dakota and took action to present it to him and thank him for his service.



TVSO RECOGNIZES 99-YEAR OLD WW II VETERAN

This week, TVSO Robert Dunsmore (Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe) and SDDVA Field Officer Kevin Swanson had the unique opportunity to honor, recognize, and thank 99-year old WW II Veteran Marcella Lebeau

Wigmuke Waste Win or Pretty Rainbow Woman, LeBeau's Lakota name, graduated from St. Mary's school of Nursing in Pierre in 1940 and enlisted in the Army Nurse Corps. She ministered World War II wounded in the wake of D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge

FSO Swanson noted it was such an honor to recognize this WWII hero who took care of our wounded heroes.





Please Join Us For An Introduction to Whole Health

What is VA Black Hills Offering?

- This Introduction to Whole Health session is designed to introduce you to the VA Whole Health approach to care.
- Our number one goal is that you accomplish the mission you create for yourself.
- Through our programs and services and, most importantly, your own strengths and abilities, we will work together in healing partnership to optimize your well-being with a focus on what is important to YOU.
- Transitioning from the Service can pose unique challenges and opportunities and we'll discuss why a whole health approach is helpful in meeting these challenges and capitalizing on your opportunities.
- We'll also describe areas of self-care and well-being that make up all the different aspects of who we are as individuals.



What is Whole Health?

- Whole Health recognizes you as a whole person and helps support your unique answer to the question, "What would you do if your health were the best it could be?"
- Whole Health goes beyond your illnesses, injuries, or disabilities.
- It focuses on your values and aspiration, your health and well-being and includes self-care and complementary therapies (such as acupuncture, massage, and yoga), along with your conventional medical care.
- In Whole Health care, you are a more active partner with your health team.

Dates and Times: March 24th 10:00am to Noon; April/May/June 2nd Tuesday of month 6:00pm – 8:00pm; Monday, April 16th Noon to 2:00pm; Friday May 18th and Friday June 15th Noon to 2:00pm

Location: American Red Cross, 1221 N Maple Ave, Rapid City SD

RSVP is NOT required; Please join us for one of these free offerings

For questions and more information contact: Lori Vosika at 605-745-2000 Ext 2176 or Dustin Saffel at 605-499-9681



VA INTERFACE PLEDGE

In a keynote speech March 9 at a Las Vegas conference that attracted more than 45,000 professionals from the health-information and technology communities, Secretary of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) David Shulkin encouraged health-care providers to sign a pledge to work with the VA to accelerate the mapping of health data to industry standards, including the current and future versions of Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR).

Shulkin amplified his announcement of the VA's Open Application Programming Interface Pledge (API), which commits the VA will provide API access to developers for veteran-designated mobile and web-based apps, clinician-designated applications for those who serve them and Choice Act partners responsible for coordinating their care via "bulk" access.

As part of this commitment, the VA also intends to make the "common clinical data set" available but will work on an initial roster of additional FHIR resources, including scheduling, questionnaire, clinical notes and patient encounters.

"We cannot do this alone," Shulkin told the audience. "To be successful in this critical mission, the VA will do our part, and we invite you to join us to accelerate the mapping of health data to industry standards, including the current and forthcoming versions of the argonaut spec of FHIR."

Further, Shulkin said, "We thank the health-care providers who have already signed this pledge, including University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic, Rush Health Systems, Geisinger Health System, Thomas Jefferson University Health, Fairview Health Services, Intermountain Healthcare and Partners HealthCare."

To join VA's Open API Pledge, visit <https://www.oit.va.gov/developer/> and click "join us." During the weeklong HiMSS conference, VA officials also announced the launch of the "beta" version of Lighthouse Lab, a computer platform offering software developers access to tools for creating mobile and web applications that will help veterans better manage their care, services and benefits.

The VA will begin building the Lighthouse Lab developer community. Participation will include helping to test APIs, building out documentation, developing governance standards and testing developer support workflows.

POST 15 CELEBRATES 99 YEARS

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman helped American Legion Post 15 in Sioux Falls celebrate their 99th birthday this past weekend. Post 15 and their members have done an outstanding job of growing their foundation built on the four pillars of rehabilitation, security, Americanism, and youth.

Congrats Post 15 on 99 GREAT years of honoring and serving our veterans!





**VIETNAM VETERAN ERA VETERANS
CELEBRATION**

DAKOTA MAGIC CASINO CONVENTION CENTER 1-800-325-6825

FRIDAY ~ 30TH MARCH 2018

11:00 - NOON

**UNITED VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF THE SISSETON WAHPETON
OYATE WILL BE HOSTING A VIETNAM ERA VETERAN CELEBRA-
TION BY SERVING A MEAL TO THE VIETNAM ERA VETERANS AND
A GUEST AT DAKOTA MAGIC CASINO CONVENTION CENTER AT
NOON**

**WE WILL HAVE ERA MUSIC PLAYED AND VIETNAM VETERAN
BUTCH FELIX ALSO SHARING SOME MUSIC.**

**WE WILL HAVE DISCOUNTED ROOMS AVAILABLE IF YOU CHOSE
TO STAY OVER NIGHT. (\$42.00)BLOCKNAME: VIETNAM VETS**

**WE ALSO WANT TO HONOR OUR KIA'S AS WELL AS OUR 192
SOUTH DAKOTAN'S THAT LOST THEIR LIVES IN VIETNAM.
IF YOU ARE A VETERAN OF THE VIETNAM ERA CONFLICT PLEASE
TAKE THE TIME OUT OF YOUR DAY—WE WANT TO HONOR YOUR
SERVICE TO OUR GREAT COUNTRY!**

**BRING A GUEST—AND WE ARE ASKING IF YOU HAVE A PICTURE
OF YOURSELF IN YOUR UNIFORM PLEASE BRING IT OR CONTACT
OUR OFFICE WE WOULD LOVE TO DISPLAY IT THIS DAY.**

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: GERI OPSAL 698-3388 OR 268-0502



**For those of you that are catholic we will be serving
fish as well—the menu will be prime rib & fish, salad,
potatoes & gravy & green beans & cake.**

Executive Proclamation

State of South Dakota

Office of the Governor

Whereas, We salute our brave Vietnam Veterans who, in service to our Nation and in defense of liberty, fought gallantly against the spread of communism and defended the Vietnamese people; and,

Whereas, We embrace our responsibility to help our Vietnam Veterans and their families heal from the heavy tolls of war. We remember the more than 58,000 men and women whose names are memorialized on a black granite wall in our Nation's Capital for having borne the heaviest cost of war; and,

Whereas, More than 27,000 South Dakotans served valiantly under difficult circumstances during the Vietnam War and 210 made the ultimate sacrifice; and,

Whereas, We also pay tribute to all brave patriots who suffered as prisoners of war, and we stand steadfast in our commitment not to rest until we account for the 1,253 heroes who have not yet returned to American soil; and,

Whereas, The Vietnam War is a story of service members of different backgrounds, races, and creeds who came together to complete a daunting mission. It is a story of Americans from every corner of our Nation who left the warmth of family to serve the country they loved. It is a story of patriots who braved the line of fire, who cast themselves into harm's way to save a friend, who fought hour after hour, day after day to preserve the liberties we hold dear; and,

Whereas, We applaud the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans service organizations, and government entities that have publicly and personally thanked and honored these heroes during the National Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War; and,

Whereas, By South Dakota statute, March 30 has been designated as Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day, a day to pay tribute to the fallen, the missing, the wounded, the millions who served, and the millions more who awaited their return:

Now, Therefore, I, Dennis Daugaard, Governor of the state of South Dakota, do hereby proclaim March 30, 2018, as

WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

in South Dakota.



In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the state of South Dakota, in Pierre, the Capital City, this Twelfth Day of March in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Eighteen.

Dennis Daugaard
Dennis Daugaard, Governor

Attest:

Shantel Krebs
Shantel Krebs, Secretary of State



Recruiting **Veteran** **Volunteers** to participate in a VA research study on...



Study focus: My HealtheVet (MHV): Learning Veterans' Viewpoints.

Why participate: To provide information as to why some veterans choose to use or not use My HealtheVet.

Who can participate: Veterans users or non-users of My HealtheVet.

What will you do: Participate in a 60-minute focus group with other Veterans discussing and answering questions related to My HealtheVet.

When: April 9, 2018 at 6 p.m. for **MHV Users** & April 10, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. for **MHV Non-Users**.

Remuneration: Participants will receive a \$25 gift card.

How do I sign up? If you are interested in participating or would like additional information, **contact Nancy Thum-Thomas**, at 605-231-0798 or nancy.thum-thomas@va.gov

VAU.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



STARTING OR GROWING A VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESS

Sign up for Boots to Business Reboot, an entrepreneurship training program for veterans and their spouses.

OWNING A VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS

Veterans have the character, discipline and skills needed to succeed as small business owners and entrepreneurs. Wondering what it takes and how you can prepare? Enroll in Boots to Business Reboot.

ABOUT BOOTS TO BUSINESS REBOOT

Boots to Business Reboot is a two-step training program that provides participants an overview of business ownership as a career vocation, an outline and knowledge on the components of a business plan, a practical exercise in opportunity recognition, and an introduction to available public and private sector resources.

Step one is the Introduction to Entrepreneurship course eligible to Veterans of all eras, service members (including members of the National Guard and Reserve) and their spouses. This course is instructed by SBA and its partners, who are skilled business advisors.

Step two is one of the online follow-on courses instructed by a consortium of professors and skilled business advisors from the SBA Network. Please email the team at boot-to-business@sba.gov if you've already attended an in-person Boots to Business class, and wish to sign-up for an online course.

Note: All SBA programs and services are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. Reasonable arrangements for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. Contact: the Boots to Business team at 202-205-8381 or email boots-to-business@sba.gov.

Saturday, April 21st

8:30 am – 4:00 pm

**B.G. Ernie Edwards
Readiness Center**

**1951 North Hwy 20
Watertown, SD 57201**

For More Information

Email: David.Puls@sba.gov

Call: (605) 330-4243 ext. 13

To join the B2B community:

<https://sbavets.force.com/s/login/SelfRegister>

To register for a Reboot class:

<https://sbavets.force.com/>

BROUGHT TO YOU LOCALLY BY:

B.G. Ernie Edwards Readiness Center
U.S. Small Business Administration-
South Dakota District Office
Veterans Business Outreach Center
SD Center for Enterprise Opportunity (SD CEO)
- Women's Business Center
Small Business Development Center
SCORE
Procurement Technical Assistance Center

The Boots to Business Reboot program is provided through the coordinated efforts of the SBA and the following valued partners:



LEARN MORE AT
WWW.SBA.GOV/BOOTSTOBUSINESSREBOOT

AND FOLLOW US AT
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/BOOTS2BUSINESS

AND ON
TWITTER.COM/BOOTS2BUSINESS

UPCOMING EVENTS

2018

Mar 21—Veterans Council Meeting—PVA Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
Mar 22—Veterans Legal Services—Watertown National Guard Armory—9:00 am—3:00 pm (CT)
Mar 23—Veterans Legal Services—Sioux Falls DAV—9:00 am—3:00 pm (CT)
Mar 29—Vietnam Recognition Ceremony—Black Hills National Cemetery—9:00 am (MT)
Apr 2—State Offices Closed
Apr 27-29—DAV State Convention—The Lodge—Deadwood
May 11—AHEC Improving Veterans Care Conference—University Center—Sioux Falls
May 11—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Domiciliary Auditorium—Hot Springs —10:00 am (MT)
Jun 7-10—American Legion State Convention—Spearfish
Jun 14-17—VFW State Convention—Sioux Falls
Jul 12—Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Cemetery Grand Opening—Sisseton—11:00 am (CT)
Jul 13 —VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Education Classroom—Fort Meade—10:00 am (MT)
Jul 14-17—DAV National Convention—Reno, NV
Jul 21-25—VFW National Convention—Kansas City, MO
Jul 26—VABHHCS Veterans Town Hall—Post 8 American Legion—Pierre
Aug 20-24—SDDVA Benefits School—Ramkota—Pierre
Aug 24-30—American Legion National Convention—Minneapolis, MN
Sept 14—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—VFW Post 1273—Rapid City—10:00 am (MT)
Oct 10—SD Veterans Commission Meeting—Soldiers and Sailors Building—Pierre—8:00 am (CT)
Nov 16—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Domiciliary Auditorium—Hot Springs —10:00 am (MT)



Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer
South Dakota Department of the Military <http://military.sd.gov>
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <http://vetaffairs.sd.gov>
Soldiers and Sailors Building - 425 E Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 605-773-8242
E-mail address: audry.ricketts@state.sd.us

